



Charles Turner was just graduated from Harvard College in June 1755 when he came to be minister in Duxbury. The Rev. William Rand of Kingston gave the ordination sermon and brought along his daughter perhaps intentionally, for the start of a romance was intruded into the solemnity of the occasion and 2 years later Mary Rand and Charles Turner were married.

Turner built his house on the upland slope overlooking the bay, on a farm that once was granted to Thomas Prence, Governor of Plymouth Colony. It is a 2-story house, the sturdy framing, wide floor and wainscot boards, and narrow windows, indicating the age and the good construction that has survived the many years.

The small barn is now part of a larger one, but its extent shows it just big enough for the minister's cow and horse. There were no carriages in Turner's day and he rode horseback on his pastoral calls, wearing his huge white wig.

The original house was a narrow rectangle with the long side facing south. It has the 2 rooms and a small entry across the front, with the long kitchen, burning room, and a second stairway across the rear, all around the big central chimney. The improvements various occupants have made for the most part been in keeping with the old style and the charm of the mid 18th century remains.

Some time after the original construction an older building was moved on for an ell, perhaps in the days when James Soule owned the farm and had a thriving ship yard on the shore. The Soule family gave its name to the lane along the west boundary, now Soule Ave. This ell seems to have been a 2-story old house, moved on with no change, as was done in dozens of instances in Duxbury. Its ceilings are hazardously low, its size conservatively small, and whether it was already on the property or moved from a distance, cannot be determined. It was, however, the usual way to enlarge a house.

The Governor Prence farm has dwindled from 80 acres to a multitude of small house lots, the governor's house is long gone, but the Charles Turner house still stands on the height overlooking the bay, a fine 18th century gentleman's home. Stephen M. and Jacqueline C. Simpson now own the house Parson Turner built in 1757.

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